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THE GIFT OF HIS FAMILY

THE GROUND AND OBJECT

OF

HOPE FOR MANKIND.

THE GROUND AND OBJECT

OF

HOPE FOR MANKIND.

FOUR SERMONS

Preached before the University of Cambridge,

IN NOVEMBER, 1867,

BY

THE REV. F. D. MAURICE, M.A.,

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SERMON I.

Having no hope, and without God in the world. — Ephesians ii. 12.

St. Paul was not wont to speak bitter words against the Gentiles, to whom he had devoted his life, for whose sake he endured the reputation of an apostate and a traitor among his own countrymen. Still less did he charge the God of his fathers with cherishing bitter thoughts against them. He told the ignorant people in Lystra that they had a perpetual witness of the God who made heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them, in that he gave them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness. He told the cultivated men who were gathered about him on Mars' Hill, that God was not far from any one of them; that in him they were living and moving and having their being. He quoted and adopted the words of Aratus, "We also are his offspring."

Why then should he tell the Ephesians who had worshipped in the temple of Diana, that till they became united with Israelites "they were without God in the world"? They must often in former days have brought that charge against those who frequented the synagogue. They must have asked the Jew of their city that question which had tormented his ancestor in the land of captivity, "Where is your God?" And now, when they were joined in the same society with those who had called them Polytheists, they found a Hebrew giving to heathens, not that name, but the one which seemed the most opposed to it.

The apostle's words were evidently not intended to exalt the outward privileges of the Jews. They occur in a letter which is throughout magnifying the revelation of the divine love to all nations. In this very passage he treats the circumcision of the flesh with indifference. Yet he appeals to their own recollection that till they cast in their lot with the circumcised they were atheists in the world.

The previous words explain these. "Not having hope." Their former worship had its sunny as well as its dark side. If costly offerings were necessary to avert plagues, they had festivals and processions in honor of the protectress of the city, and of other benignant powers. But there was a power behind, indefinite, unutterable, fearful to think of. What was

it? Did not the death which interrupted all plans, which broke up all families, from which no gracious demon could preserve the most favored, supply the most practical answer to that question? There would come a day when this power could no longer be appeased by any sacrifices, — when it would demand them as its victims. What would happen then who could say? There might be that in them which the destroyer could not destroy; there might be that which he would always be destroying.

Now when Greeks who had been haunted by these thoughts opened the Hebrew books, which had now become their possession, what did they find? Not some secondary demon, but he who was called King of kings, Lord of lords; he whom, it was said, the heaven of heavens could not contain, whom no man had seen or could see, was invoked as a refuge from despondency, the object of an imperishable hope. Like all other men, the Israelites trembled at the thought of death; the best of them never dissembled their dread of it. But God was the living God. He was a dwelling-place for all generations, though one after another was swept away like a flood, though the grass which was green in the morning had withered before the night. Not men basking in some rare felicity, but footsore pilgrims, warriors in the heat of the battle, could use this language. They fled from

evils which they felt, from evils which they had done, to the God of their salvation. They dared not call him by any other name. In the lowest depth the sufferer could say to himself, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." Certainly if this was the God in whom St. Paul believed, — whom he proclaimed as the God to them, — the Ephesians could not but own the truth of his assertion. They might have had images of gods in every highway and market-place; their minds might have been peopled with notions which corresponded to these images; nevertheless they had been without God in the world.

And this was the God whom St. Paul worshipped, the God whom he had proclaimed to them. Of him he spoke when he said, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Of him he spoke when he said that "Christ had risen from the dead in the glory of the Father." Of him he spoke when he declared that Jews and Gentiles had "both access by one Spirit to the Father." St. Paul was not, as his countrymen affirmed, forgetting the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, that he might make peace with idolaters. He was declaring that the God of Abraham was the

God of the whole earth; that his covenant to bless all the families of the earth was not a mockery; that he was "the God of Hope" to all kindreds, and peoples, and tongues.

That wonderful phrase, "The God of Hope," is introduced in this very connection by the apostle in his epistle to the Romans: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers. And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing to thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, and in him shall the Gentiles trust. Now the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

To proclaim this name in the ears of all peoples was the work to which St. Paul deemed that he was called by a divine revelation. Nothing less than such a revelation could have convinced him that idolaters had a right to confess a God who was the source and spring of hope in them, who was the object of all hope to them. Nothing, therefore, less than such a

revelation could have enabled him to assert the meaning of the Jewish covenant, to vindicate the very letter of the books which he had accounted most sacred. "Our God is the God of salvation" was the sound which had ascended from the chamber of every lowly Israelite, which the chorus of young men and maidens, of old men and children, had repeated as they went up to the Holy Hill, with which the temple had rung. If he might say in every heathen city, "This God is your God, worship him," he was maintaining the faith of the prophets, he was declaring that the promises on which they rested had not been delusions. If he might not say this, there would remain a Judaism, a set of opinions professed by a small Syrian tribe, — a set of customs dividing that tribe from the rest of the world. The opinions might be skilfully defended, the customs might be zealously guarded. There might even be vigorous attempts to propagate the opinions; a few proselytes might be won from the customs of their forefathers, and persuaded to adopt these in exchange for them. Every such proselyte would seem to be a witness for the local limitations of the Being to whose service he devoted himself, a witness that he was just like the tutelary God of every other race, an exclusive patron of that race. If the principle of idolatry was to be overthrown, not merely the forms in which it had

clothed itself, there must be some pledge and token that the unseen Lord claimed dominion in all places and over all men, some pledge that he was not less really a Saviour to all men than to those whom he had brought out of bondage in Egypt.

It was a startling, amazing message : "God is himself the Redeemer of mankind in that Son in whom he originally created men. The redemption is from the power of death and of the grave, from the power of the lusts by which men have been led captive, from the power of all invisible tempters who draw our spirits into malice, falsehood, despair. The redemption extends to the whole man ; to the animal frame which is so curiously and wonderfully made ; to the thoughts, counsels, purposes of the mind ; to the desires, apprehensions, longings, which carry us above ourselves, which must create ever new visions of bliss or of terror for us if we cannot grasp what is solid and not visionary." It was the strangest, most amazing news of all. "These desires that you have supposed you must quench as too good to be true, which seemed to involve the sin of Tantalus and his punishment, are those which God himself has awakened in you, is keeping alive in you, is sustaining by his Spirit amidst all the nipping frosts and burning heats that are threatening to kill them. He inspires you with the faith which puts on a righteousness that

is not yours, but his. He inspires you with the hope that saves you from the visible or invisible things that are threatening to destroy you." "We are saved by hope," cries the apostle; "but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Thus hope which had been so often represented as the most flickering, deceitful, fantastical of all human emotions, became for him the energy of which steadfast action, quiet endurance are the fruits. For the hope is in Him whose purposes do not change; who has been, and is, and will be the same forever; in Him who will through all ages be revealing more of himself and of his ways to his creatures.

Such was the gospel which shook the idolatry of the nations. The ordinary Jewish proselytizer might have tempted a few Ephesians to disbelieve in the huntress, to call their divinity by a Hebrew name. What such converts frequently became, our Lord declared in a terrible sentence. Their heartless scorn, their moral corruptions may have induced many a thoughtful heathen to resolve that he would rather cling to opinions and services which he could not justify, than incur the risk of sinking into a lower depth. Many more, after hovering awhile between the two worships, may have ended in thinking that there was nothing

real in heaven or earth. Saul of Tarsus must have been equipped in the school of Gamaliel with weapons for overthrowing all different forms of idolatry. When he entered into the actual fight, he found no use for them. He exposed no fable. He ridiculed no tradition. He only induced any one to cast away his torch by bidding him go forth into the sunlight. But that method proved to be the effectual one. The instinct of Demetrius the silversmith was more sound than that of the Roman magistrate who rebuked his fanaticism. Though St. Paul was no blasphemer of the image which fell down from Jupiter, and which all Asia and the world worshipped, he was more than any blasphemer spoiling the trade of those who made shrines for the goddess. The dream of a Father of Gods who partook of all the frailties and sins of men, gave way before the announcement of a Father of Spirits, who chastened men for their profit that they might be partakers of his holiness. The hum of oracles was hushed before the voice of the living word. Magicians and enchanters trembled when they heard of a Spirit who guided into all truth.

If St. Paul's disciples had seen in him a man of great buoyancy and cheerfulness; one of those who are scarcely conscious of any troubles which beset them; who can shake off painful recollections easily; who are optimists by temperament and constitution;

they might have heard his exhortations to hope in God, to hope always, to hope against hope, and might only have wished that it was possible to attain the pleasant frame of mind which was natural to him. No such spectacle was presented to them in one whose bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible ; who never concealed it from his disciples that without him were troubles, within him were fears ; who testified of conflicts in which he had despaired even of life. With fibres answering to every touch ; with that sense of personal insignificance which is most exquisitely painful when it is accompanied with burning zeal and the certainty of a grand vocation ; oppressed by the ingratitude of converts and the hatred of his kinsmen after the flesh ; in the midst of a falling nation which was unspeakably dear to him ; with the care of churches that were full of strife and contradictions ; wrestling, as he said, with principalities and powers, with the rulers of darkness in high places, — he was driven to hope. Hope was indeed the anchor of his soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil whither the forerunner, the great High-Priest of the race, had entered already.

My brethren, there are many aspects of this subject which I believe especially concern us at this time. Some of them I may try to set before you in future sermons. I shall confine myself this afternoon

to that which is suggested by the words of the text, illustrated as they are by the work of the apostle. We have been considering the missionary to heathens, him, through whom, as the collect for his day says, God caused the light of his gospel to shine throughout the world. We have seen what the charms were to which he resorted, wherein the secret of his influence lay, how he acted on the mind of an age, which, without abandoning its superstitions, was rapidly passing into atheism. Have we not here the lesson-book for all who in our days, from our country, or from any country in Christendom, go forth to convert men to the faith of Christ? I do not speak now of the education which is to fit them for encountering different opinions and traditions. He, who became all things to all men, — who drew his comparisons from the bales of goods on the sea-coast when he was writing to Ephesians, — from the Isthmian games when he was writing to Corinthians; who had one method of awakening faith in the barbarous people of Melita, another when he was looking upon the temples of Athens, — might have many a warning for the modern teacher against the temptation to confound habits and beliefs which are entirely dissimilar; against the folly of holding discussions with those who have no capacity for discussion; against the greater folly of imputing ignorance to those who may have read much,

and may possess the gift of subtle reasoning. But what I am more anxious to consider now is, whether, with any set of men, in any circumstance, the missionary's business, if he follow St. Paul's precedent, will be to debate and refute. In the merest devil worshipper — the man who only confesses powers of destruction — there will be a cry, "Is there no one who can save us from these powers?" "Is there no one who is stronger than this death, which threatens our bodies and threatens us who have these bodies?" The news of a living God, the Creator of men, who has sent his Son to grapple with death and to conquer death; of a God whose Spirit can overcome all spirits of darkness; of a God in whom the feeblest may hope always, — this news will surely come to such men, amidst their savagery and their fetish worship, with a demonstration and power which cannot accompany any denunciation or scorn of their ancestral notions and practices.

But are not skilful exposures of scientific errors as well as of mythological extravagances highly desirable in the case of a people like the Hindoos, who possess learned books and learned scholars, and systems of great refinement and complication? No doubt a missionary with even a small amount of Western culture may point out current doctrines which science overthrows; with even a moderate standard of

Western morality, may vaunt its superiority to the Brahminial morality. He will be the more drawn into this course because he is sure to meet with a number of intelligent natives who will endorse all his contempt for the opinions and practices which their fathers deemed sacred. And then the missionary may find that he has a second work to do, somewhat harder than the first. When he has extirpated — or seemed to extirpate — the idolatry, he will have to consider how he may clear away the deposit of atheism which it has left behind it. Might it not have been wiser to adopt St. Paul's method, to treat both as parts of the same disease, as requiring the same remedy? In the popular systems there is room for every form and manifestation of a destructive or a preserving divinity; in the philosophy there is room for every conception of a God who is identical with his priest, or who is absorbed in his own essence, who was born myriads of years ago, or who has had no birth, who is diffused through all things, or whose consummation is nothingness. The missionary may find himself in a whirlwind of all the thoughts which have ever passed through his own mind, of the speculations which have occupied the latest times. He will not find the pledge and assurance of a God of hope, who is mightier than death and despair, in any system popular or philosophical; he may trace the yearning for such a God in each one.

Can he meet that yearning? Yes; if he really believes in a God whose Son became incarnate that he might redeem mankind from its curse; whose Spirit quickens and renews human hearts and wills, and is preparing them for an eternal life and an eternal rest, into which he desires that all his creatures should enter. Why should such a message come with greater power to Greeks of the first century than to Hindoos of the nineteenth?

But St. Paul, you may say, who spoke to the Greeks of the first century, could work miracles; we who speak to the Hindoos of the nineteenth century can work none. The case of Ephesus supplies us with an excellent test for estimating the value of this difference. We are told by St. Luke that his companion wrought special miracles there. He indicates very clearly the use of those miracles. Ephesus, like all great commercial cities in that age, was haunted by enchanters and magicians. The spirit of imposture and falsehood was at work producing wonderments; leading men to believe that chance or legerdemain can set aside the order of God's universe. The spirit of truth would show that the real power dwells with the Creator, the God of order; that life, health, restoration are from him. The principle is the very same that was asserted in the miracles which Moses wrought before Pharaoh. The unseen Deliverer of slaves

proved that he was mightier than the priests of Egypt, who ministered to the tyrant's pleasure and kept the people in ignorance of their true ruler. St. Paul asserted the worth of miracles for this end. He asserted, at the same time, that the spirit of truth might use them or dispense with them as was best for the purposes of truth ; that the power which awakened faith and hope was not in them, but in him. He asserted that all gifts whatever were from this spirit ; that he distributed to all severally as he would. If we choose to say that the gifts of the regular physician are not his, as much as any special miraculous gifts, we may do so ; but we are dissenting from St. Paul, — we cannot any longer appeal to his authority. If we say that such powers may not be more efficient witnesses for a God of order in our day than sudden exhibitions of strange force, — with which most heathen countries are familiar, — we are at liberty to hold our opinion ; but we should do well to ask ourselves whether it is not derived from our unbelief in a divine Teacher who desires that all men should be saved from their ignorance and darkness, and who would use us as his instruments to save them, if we did not exalt our calculations above his wisdom.

And is not there another unbelief mixed with this ? Do we not half suspect that the God of hope cannot impart his gospel to idolaters in one day unless we can

first convince them that our Scriptures have an authority which does not belong to their shasters? O my brethren, is the history of our own conversion nothing to us? Did our ancestors pass through a discipline of Scripture proofs and evidences before they turned from powers of evil and darkness to the God of hope? Was it not the acknowledgment of his name, of his salvation, which raised the Scriptures from dead letters into living words? Did not those who had believed that Christ was indeed the image of the invisible God, that in him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily, find in every psalm of hope and thanksgiving the witness of the God whom Christ had revealed? There was no balancing of proofs as to the divine origin of the Hebrew or other books. They expressed the wants, the anguish, the despair of men in the West, as they had expressed the wants, the anguish, the despair of men in the East. They declared in whom the men of the West like the men of the East might hope when their wants were most pressing, their anguish keenest, their despair most incapable of being banished by any charms. And so coming with all their national costume about them, they moulded the thought, the literature, the art of modern Europe. They taught Christians how to appropriate the treasures of the heathen world, and to use them as witnesses against its idolatry. They told Christians always to love

light and to hate darkness, because God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. Is it not in this way that the Scriptures must commend themselves to the inhabitants of every part of the globe? If they are not messengers of hope to us, shall we ever persuade any nation to see the divine image in them?

I cannot speak of hope without thinking specially of you, my younger friends, who are in what is, or ought to be, the season of hope. Nor can I speak of the work of the missionary without thinking of you. Few of you may bear the name; all of you must be missionaries in fact. Wherever you go as soldiers or civilians, you must be your country's missionaries. You must represent her greatness or her meanness, her godliness or her atheism, her hope or her despair. You must bear a better witness for her than we have borne, or a worse and more degrading witness. Oh, let it be a nobler! Show, as we have not shown, what the might of hope is to purify and elevate the characters of all in whom it dwells. Therefore let your hope be in no uncertain thing, but in the unchangeable God. Let the message go forth to all from your lips and in your lives, "Our God is your God; trust in him, and you shall not be confounded."

The Hope of the Patriot.

SERMON II.

For the hope of Israel am I bound with this chain. — Acts xxviii. 20.

St. Paul had told the Christians in Rome that he intended to visit them as soon as he had carried the contributions of the Greek churches to the poor in Jerusalem. He came to Rome as he had designed, but not as their guest. An accused man who had appealed to Cæsar must have a different entertainer. He had to change a prison in Cæsarea for a prison in the capital. His thoughts seem to have expanded as his sphere of action became narrower. However he might welcome the visits of those who had confessed Jesus to be the Christ, he felt that he had been brought to the centre of the world for another purpose than to soothe himself with their friendship, or even to strengthen their faith. He sought for intercourse with the chiefs of the Jews; with those who best represented that race which exercised so considerable an influence for good or for evil in the Roman world. Though his countrymen had conspired against his

life he at once asserted his claim to be an Israelite. He went further: he maintained that he was suffering not for some special opinion or doctrine of his, but for the principle of which his nation was the witness. "For the hope of Israel am I bound with this chain."

The boast must have astonished those who first heard it. Perhaps it may not sound less astonishing to us. It is at variance with many of those conceptions respecting the apostle which we have derived from the events of his life and the statements in his letters. He had cast off the system in which he had been brought up; he had lost all credit with his school; even disciples of Jesus looked on him with suspicion because he lived among Gentiles as if he were a Gentile. No one had spoken with a sadder confidence of the ruin which was approaching Jerusalem. With these thoughts on his mind, with this prospect before him, how could he identify his hopes with the hope of Israel? How could he tell his countrymen, who regarded him as the champion of a dangerous heresy, that there was a hope which was common to them and him? If we can find an answer to these questions, I think we shall understand what that hope is which God has cultivated in his servants; which has sustained them through all perils; which every new trial has deepened and confirmed.

The permanence of Israel through all vicissitudes

and downfalls is the subject of the Old Testament. The tribes are in danger of being lost in the Goshen which the king of Egypt has assigned them. A Pharaoh arises who is jealous of them. His persecution brings forth the youth who prefers exile in Madian to the favor of the monarch. A nation is born out of a set of families. It seems likely to perish in the wilderness. But a promised land is always before the fugitives. Though without their old leader they conquer Canaan and establish themselves in it. There is disorder among the tribes, mimicry of the surrounding idolatries, subjection to various tyrants. Again and again some chief is raised up for their deliverance; amidst quarrels and tumults there is approach to an order. The priests who should have preserved it are its destroyers; the Philistines prevail; the ark is taken; the nation disappears. The prophet Samuel is inspired with a hope for his country. It rises again a healthier, more organic community than it had ever been. It aspires to be a kingdom. The first experiment, beginning in the disbelief of an unseen King, is a failure. Saul becomes a madman. On Gilboa the nation again appears to be extinguished. The shepherd boy cherishes the hope of Israel. God will set his King on the holy Hill of Zion. The habit of associating the Psalms, which stretch through so many periods of Jewish history, with the name of

David, indicates the feeling of their national character and unity which has possessed the minds of all their readers. There is the shout of a king in every part of them. It must be of a real king, whatever his name may be. If David is gone, with his courage and his weakness, his nobleness and his sins; if the successor who was to do for the land what he might not do, passes from the glorious monarch into the idolater and the tyrant; if the tribes become separated, not in their capitals only but in their worship; if revolutions are needful to put down rulers who fancy that they reign to please themselves; if each reforming monarch gives place to one who introduces more debasing superstitions; if every new seer has to mourn over increasing dulness, sottishness, atheism, in priests, rulers, prophets, people; if the seer is taught that the little state, which exists only as a witness for a righteous kingdom against mere power, must sink into the great Babylonian empire, when it has no principle different from that; yet the vision of a King whose goings forth have been from everlasting, of a King who shall be shown to be the Prince of all the kings of the earth, rises clearer and clearer behind these dark visions; the features of such a King become more and more distinct as the features of some tyrant that defies him become also more distinct and ghastly. The hope of Israel the prophet saw was centred in this King.

He lived then; he would be fully revealed hereafter. Captivity and restoration would alike testify of his abiding presence, would alike foretell his ultimate triumph. The nation might cast its leaves, but the substance of it, like that of the oak-tree or the teil-tree, would remain through years or ages of winter. It could not perish, for the holy seed was in it.

This sense of the immortality of the nation, in its invisible Head, gave the Israelite a sense of personal immortality, which was far deeper than any which he could have derived from speculations on the imperishable nature of the soul. Hezekiah could only mourn and chatter like a dove when he saw death confronting him, threatening to take him out of the land which was associated with all his thoughts of the Divine Protector. But he rose up a new man out of his confusion and despondency; for he was able to say, "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day; the father to the son shall make mention of thy name." God would live in the next generation as he had lived in the generations that were gone; because he lived, each man could feel amidst all doubts and bewilderments, "I too shall live." Separate from God the Israelite could see nothing but death; in him, nothing but life for his nation and for himself.

The great antagonist to this hope for Israel, so the

prophets again and again testified, was the covetousness of their countrymen. Each man was seeking his own ends, each was desiring chariots and horses that should exhibit his own glory and his difference from his neighbors. A common hope in a God of the whole nation was driven out by these desires in each man for a separate felicity. The dream of gods presiding over particular persons and favoring particular inclinations — the dream of material gods who could enter into the material longings of their worshippers — had unspeakable attractions for a self-seeking and divided people. Then follows the appointed punishment. The oppression of these visible gods and of those who serve them becomes intolerable. A hope for Israel springs up in a few hearts. It was so in the period embraced by the canonical Scriptures. It was so afterwards. The savage purpose of Antiochus to put down the temple worship calls forth the Maccabæan heroes. Again the nation rises; the unseen King is again believed in. Then division appears in a new form. The old idolatry is worn out. The Scriptures which protest against idolatry are worshipped. There must be schools to interpret them, and to preserve Israelites from deserting them. The strictest and most popular sect accepts the tenet of a future state far more distinctly than it had been accepted by law-givers and prophets. But the future state of the

Pharisee involves no hope for Israel. It is a hope that he may obtain certain prizes hereafter for what he has done here. It is a continuation through ages of the covetousness which he has cultivated in the threescore years and ten. The Sadducee is content with those threescore years and ten. While they last, he has as little hope for Israel as the rival sect; both despise the common people, and, for one merit or another, glorify themselves. The sects have triumphed over the nation. The Roman empire has triumphed over both. The dream of some king who shall deliver the nation from that yoke cannot be utterly extinguished in any student of the prophets. But a covetous and sectarian people must mould the king according to its own conceptions. He must be like the Cæsar, they say, if he is to conquer the Cæsar; he must exalt our sect and favor our dominion if he is the messenger of God.

And then came One who was not the least like the Cæsar, who grew up among peasants, and chose peasants for his companions. By them he was hailed as the Deliverer and King of Israel. They said that he gave them such signs of being a deliverer and a king as none other had given. He exercised powers which no Cæsar had ever exercised. He exercised them for an object nearly the opposite of that which most of the Cæsars set before themselves; the object of free-

ing men from plagues of body, of mind, of spirit. The blessing was for Israelites as such. The schools were not honored, but denounced. Their acts were treated as acts of service to Mammon, not to Jehovah. But the lowest of the people, the outcasts of the land, were claimed as sheep for whom the Chief Shepherd cared, as children for whom his Father was seeking.

Had this Teacher then a right to call God his Father? Was he the Son of God? The priests said he was a blasphemer for giving himself that name. Was he the king whom Israel expected? The priests said he was a traitor to Cæsar if he took that name. They uttered the cry, "We have no king but Cæsar." And Pilate, having received that confession from them, delivered Jesus to be crucified.

Saul of Tarsus had fully accepted this sentence upon the pretensions of him whom he considered the Nazarene impostor. He had not, perhaps, accepted as readily the acknowledgment of the Roman dominion. That he may have deemed an act of Sadducean policy, a renunciation of Jewish privileges. The thought of a divine King may never have been wholly buried in him under the Pharisaical dogmatism. But if so, he was all the more anxious to put down the sect which dared to claim the title for a crucified Galilean. The light from heaven discovered to him One who had submitted to death and had risen from

the dead, as the King and Saviour of Israel. In that character he accepted Jesus; in that character he proclaimed him to his countrymen. The true Ruler had appeared, that Ruler whom prophets had contrasted with the Babylonian monarch of their day; that Ruler whom the chief priests of Jerusalem would not receive because they had in their hearts no king but Cæsar; because they hoped to see a Jewish Cæsar springing out of the root of Jesse. St. Paul could truly say, Before I acknowledged Jesus, my hope, so far as I had any hope, was for myself. Now my hope is for Israel. For that hope am I bound with this chain.

It was no chance utterance prompted by the sight of the men with whom he was conversing. When he was writing to the Christians in the city of Rome, of whom probably a majority had been heathens, he expressed, not only a passionate zeal for his Jewish brethren, not only an overwhelming sorrow that they had denied God's righteousness and exalted their own, not only an anticipation of their speedy ruin as a people; but beyond and behind all this, a sure and certain hope that, as their fall had been for the blessing of the world, so their restoration would be life from the dead. Such language, used in such circumstances, rising out of the very depth of his anguish, shows how thoroughly he had entered into the convictions of the

seers that had gone before him ; how their words about the life of the tree which had lost leaves and boughs and branches had fixed themselves in his heart ; what assurance they derived from his belief in the dominion of a Christ who had suffered for the sins of men, and who was the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. To have a hope in Christ which was not a hope for Israel, seemed to him impossible.

Many will say that if he could have looked on through the eighteen hundred years that have followed the day when the letter to the Romans was written, he would have felt the vanity of his hope for his country ; he would have learned that if his hope in Christ was linked to the hope for Israel, it, too, was a delusion. Asking what those eighteen hundred years tell us about the two portions of the world, both of which were so dear to the apostle, I cannot think that he was indulging in fantasies about either of them. The Jewish race has gone on existing through all these centuries,— so existing that all nations have had to take account of it, — have felt the influence of it in the highest spiritual region to which they can rise, in the lowest material region to which they can sink. You can enter into no church in any corner of the Old or the New World, where Christ's name is honored, but you find yourself sitting at the feet of Jews, listening to their lessons. You can go into no Mahometan

mosque, you can read no page in the Koran, without being reminded of Abraham and of Moses. You can enter into no temple of Mammon where the Jewish countenance and the Jewish power are not present. In the region which is intermediate between these, — the region of art, letters, philosophy, — this race has been making itself illustrious in former days and in our own. These are marvellous signs of endurance amidst every possible shock from tempests without; amidst the more terrible absence of that which constitutes the inward vitality of a nation. This people have every gift; only they are not a people: they have continuance; only something is wanted to bind the ages of their history together: they have a glorious past, — what is to be their future? To me it seems that St. Paul spoke confidently of the future because he believed that the nation subsists in its everlasting King; that he has bound its ages together; that in him all promises are yea and amen. Having that conviction, I do not think we are giving a special proof of our fidelity to Christ when we say, "The life of this people has come utterly to an end for evermore; the tree has been kept as a stock in the ground for all these centuries, yet it is never again to send forth blossoms and buds: all nations have been living on the fruits which it once bore; but it can never bear fruit again." I fancy that, when we begin to talk in that

fashion, we show that we have far more respect for our Christianity, which is a very poor and sickly plant, than belief in Christ; for I know not how belief in him can be separated from hope in him.

Surely, if we check that hope in any Jew, — if we persuade him not to expect the appearance of a great Deliverer who shall raise his nation out of its degradation, but only to acknowledge that he has appeared to confer some benefits on us, — we rob him of his choicest treasure; of that which has been the one great counteraction to his Mammon worship; of that which may lead him at last to discover what the King is who can alone take away iniquity from Jacob; whose Spirit it is that can breathe into the dry bones and cause them to rise up a great army.

There is another lesson in these words, my brethren, which concerns us even more than this. It is very important to learn how we should or should not speak to Jews; how we may speak to them so as to stifle the good which we find in them; so as to imitate those proselytizers among their fathers to whom I alluded last Sunday, — those who made their converts worse than themselves. But it is still more important that we should not trifle with the wonderful gifts which God has bestowed upon us; that we should not, with religious airs and under religious pretences, treat that as profane which he has pronounced sacred. There

are many Christians who would persuade us that the life of a nation is what they call a secular thing; that it may be very well, on mere earthly grounds, to care for the land in which we have been born and nurtured,— in which our affections have grown, — in which, alas! they may have withered; but that if we would turn our minds to heavenly contemplations, and be in the true sense servants of God, we must be looking to a time when all that belongs to us as citizens shall have passed away. My friends, I solemnly deny that a nation is a secular thing in any sense, but that most legitimate and noble one, which Milton gives to the word, when he speaks of the secular bird, the bird that lives through ages. The Scriptures must either be given up, as records which may have been true once, but which have ceased to be true for us, or we must admit that there is an immortality for a nation, and that when one of its citizens separates his interests from its interests he loses the practical sense of his immortality, because he loses the sense of his relation to the righteous and everlasting God. If by "secular" is meant that which belongs to the fashion of a particular age, — that which shuts out the acknowledgment of the permanent and the eternal, — that, I grant, is hostile to Christian faith; that is the "evil world" against which we are to fight. But one of the greatest weapons which God has given us in our con-

flict with this enemy — whether it invites us to worship the conceits of our own age, or of some departed age — is the assurance that the nation has lived, lives now, and will live in Him, who was, and is, and is to come. If we part with this belief, we may talk of a future state as much as we will, but we shall be in the worst sense worldly. The palpable things — the things of sense — will seem to us the real things. The money which enables us to purchase these things, whatever contempt we may affect for it, will be our real measure of worth. The Jewish history tells us that no theory about a world after death was a deliverance from this baseness ; the Pharisee transferred to that world the habits and associations of this. The history of the church repeats the same lesson in every page. It tells us how the most utter worldliness may possess the hearts of those who seem to be trampling on the world. It tells us how the vulgarest diplomacy, the meanest trickery, the most horrible lies, may be treated as the proper armor of the Christian soldier. For these the armor with which St. Paul, in the epistle for this day, bids us clothe ourselves — the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit — has been cast aside. Rejected by those who call themselves religious, it has been worn by many a man who has been deemed irreligious by his contemporaries, who has perhaps adopted their opinion, but who in solitude

and desertion has learned to trust in the God of his fathers. The faith of such men, we who believe in the Scriptures of the Old Testament must liken to that of the heroes whom God raised up to beat down the idols by which their countrymen had been enslaved, and to restore the Jewish commonwealth. For they have preferred an unseen hope to visible possessions; they have been witnesses against that which was destroying the moral life of their land; they have been willing to wear chains that their country might some day become free. Such courage and hope I dare not trace to any other source than to the Spirit who dwelt in prophets and apostles.

My friends, there are strains of a higher measure than those which the mere patriot of Judea or of any land can attain. We may try to catch a few notes of this music from St. Paul's lips next Sunday. But I do not think we shall listen to him then, if we do not listen to him now. If we do not enter into his hope for Israel, I believe we shall have only the faintest glimpse of what he means when he speaks to us of the whole family in heaven and earth. We cannot reverence heaven or know what it is, if we do not reverence the earth on which Christ walked and which he redeemed. We cannot attain Christ's likeness, if we do not learn to care for England as he cared for Palestine when it

was in its lowest condition. We cannot hope in Christ for ourselves, if we suppose that he is indifferent about the righteousness and the freedom of our nation. Believe that he would save it from the corruptions and abominations which threaten its life; believe that his Spirit would kindle in us an indignation against them, a vehement desire to be free from them ourselves, that we may not hasten our country's ruin, but avert it. And let no cold suspicions sever you from those who in other lands are groaning over the miseries which they see, over the degradation which they suffer. If they know not who is inspiring their cries, who is giving them hope of a Deliverer, tell them that grand secret. Bid them hope on, hope always, because, when all earthly succors fail, when all visible helpers prove false, there is a King eternal, immortal, invisible, who will not desert any that put their trust in him. Speak to the despairing citizens of every land those words which rose from the heart of a sorrowing Israelite in the olden time: "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly

fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

The Hope of the Churchman.

SERMON III.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. — EPH. iv. 4, 5, 6.

I TRIED to show you last week that the hope of St. Paul in Christ was united inseparably to a hope for the deliverance and the glory of his country. He had looked for a King of Israel. The Jesus whom the priests of his land had given up to the Romans as a traitor, whom they had crucified, whose followers he had persecuted, was revealed to him as this King. Believing in him, Saul of Tarsus could understand as he had never understood before the language of his ancestors. He could see why the name of Israel had been so real a name to them from age to age. It expressed a unity which God had established and which he would maintain. The nation might appear to perish, but it could not perish. It stood firm in an everlasting King. Its rulers might disown him, but he would uphold it. Their unbelief could not triumph over his faithfulness.

Not the loss of this hope for his own nation, but the recovery of it, prepared Saul of Tarsus to be the apostle of the nations. Whilst he contemplated his nation merely or chiefly as opposed to other nations, while a Jew meant in his dialect not a Gentile, whilst the belief in one God was scarcely more than a denial of many Gods, his hopes for it must have been very flickering. Fear, not hope, must have been his predominant feeling,—fear, not of Rome only, but of every sect which might shake a state that seemed to be so tottering. The conviction that One had appeared who was the glory of his people Israel, could not be divided from the conviction that he was a light to lighten the Gentiles.

In the epistle to the Ephesians he connects the discovery of a unity between the two portions of mankind with a discovery respecting the divine Unity. A truth, he says, which had been hidden for ages and generations was now revealed by the Spirit. His language on this subject rises to such heights, his prayers for the illumination of the minds of his readers respecting this unity are so amazing, that we might suppose we were quite carried away from the experiences and conflicts of ordinary men. We are soon reminded how thoroughly practical his purpose is; how fully aware he is of the petty as well as of the grander occasions which might disturb the fellowship

of the church in every city where it had been established. We could imagine, if we had not distinct evidence, how tremendous the collision must have been between the elements of which the infant church was composed. Those who, as St. Paul said in his speech at Athens, had been especially devoted to the worship of demons, — gods conceived in the likeness of men, capable of being represented in human forms, — were brought into intimate daily intercourse with those who had been taught to believe in One whom no man had seen or could see, and of whom no image must be made out of things in heaven or earth, or under the earth. Those who had come with their sacrifices to the gods, for the sake of conciliating them and disarming their vengeance, stood and knelt side by side with those who had been told that such sacrifices were abominations; that God himself appointed the sacrifices which should be presented to him; that he himself made the atonement with the sinner who came to confess his sin. Besides these greater differences a multitude of debates, not less dangerous because turning on minute points of ancestral habit or antipathy, were starting up at every moment to threaten the peace of the new community. Every epistle of St. Paul bears witness to the existence of these disturbing forces. All his subtlest wisdom as well as his deepest tenderness was called forth to encounter them. The

passage which I have taken as my text opens with an exhortation to the Ephesian Christians that they would "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. To do that would require a steady, continuous effort. The foes to unity, the destroyers of peace, would appear in the oldest and the newest shapes; they would appear to be angels of light. But the endeavor, let them always recollect, was not to win a possession, but to "keep" one. They were united in Christ. He had made peace between them. His blood was the seal and bond of their fellowship. For the apostle goes on, —

1. There is one body.

Your relation to each other is a real relation. You may disown it. You may act as if you were separate creatures. But you cannot make yourselves such. And you will always be resisting a Power which is seeking to preserve you in your union. For

2. There is one Spirit.

You may have a number of impulses urging you to follow your own private inclinations. You may call these impulses spiritual. You may say that the gospel has raised you above formal laws into a freer region. But the Spirit of God is not a dividing but a uniting Spirit. He is working in you to make you free from the tempers which set you at war with each other. So and so only is he raising you above the restraints and

prohibitions of law. He is doing for you that which restraints and prohibitions cannot do. He is acting on your wills. And,

3. Ye are called in one hope of your calling.

You have been called out of the worship of visible gods, who inspired you with no hope. Or you have been called out of a dry Judaism, from which all hope had vanished. The God of hope himself has called you. Jews and Gentiles, you may alike turn to him from whom your hope comes, who is the object of your hope.

There, as I have pointed out to you already, was the grand distinction between their former state and the state into which they had been brought. The gospel was a message of hope, — of hope not in some possible events to happen hereafter, not in some change of circumstances, but in the living and immutable God. It was a hope for Jews and Gentiles equally. It was false for both, if it was false for either. They would sink into the same atheism if they might not hope in the same God.

4. One Lord.

Every Jew had known these words from his infancy, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord." But there was no unity in that name for the modern Jew. It meant division from the rest of mankind. He held the tenet of monotheism. Could he put his

trust in that tenet? Was it that tenet which had broken the yoke of Pharaoh; had established the law; had forgiven iniquity, transgression, and sin; had punished the guilty? St. Paul preached of a one Lord who was not a tenet but a Person; of one who being in the form of God had taken on him the form of a servant, who had humbled himself to the death of the cross, who had been exalted above all principalities and powers that he might fill all things. Such a Lord he could speak of to Greeks, for he gathered into himself all that they had dreamed of in their different protectors. He was not less one with men because he did not share their selfishness. He could bear the sins of all because he was free from the sins of any. Of such a Lord the apostle could speak to Jews. For he had shown forth in himself that righteousness which the Jew recognized as the essential nature of God. He had exhibited it in human acts. He had vindicated the truth of the record that man is made in the image of God, not God in the image of man. The apostle goes on, —

5. One faith. The first father of the Jewish race had been called the father of the faithful. He lived by faith in a God whom he could not see. His descendants could only live by the same faith. The modern Jew meant by faith the opinions of his school That could never be a one faith. Was it a faith at all?

Was it not the reverse of faith? — a treasure which a man could call his; not implying trust in another, — rather the greatest dependence on the security of his own conclusions, or at least on his wisdom in determining who should supply him with conclusions. The Greek sects brought into the church their theories of the universe, unlike those of the Jews. The ignorant of both races knew little of the theories, but had various superstitions that were dear to them. St. Paul spake of a one faith. "Wise men! you may know much of the universe, but you want One who knows it better and who knows you better than you know. Ignorant men! who show in a thousand ways that you are feeling after God, though you can frame only the poorest conception of him. There is One in whom you may all have faith." So saying, he was going back to the lessons of the Old Testament. He was asserting that hope of his people which had been crushed under the notions of its doctors.

How was it when he added, —

6. One baptism?

"Think not," said John, when he came into the wilderness of Judea, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. The baptism, ac-

cording to his teaching, was to lay low the pride of those who fancied they had some distinction from others on the ground of race. It was to exalt the God of Abraham above Abraham, — the blessings which he could bestow above any that could be inherited. And he would bestow the highest blessing that man could receive. One was coming after John who was preferred before him, for he was before him. He would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. That baptism, St. Paul said, Jews and Gentles alike might receive. With that Spirit both might be sealed. For God had sent forth his Son, born of a woman, made under the law, that both might receive the adoption of sons. And because they were sons, he had sent his Spirit into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father. He spoke to Greeks who had dreamed of an inspiration in oracular caves, to bacchanals, to every harmonious singer, to every teacher of wisdom. He confirmed, expanded, purified all these thoughts. The Spirit was to guide, not a few specially chosen men, but all. Every gift was from him ; but calmness, not wildness, awe and humility, not self-glorification, were his especial graces, the witnesses of his presence. St. Paul could appeal to the Jewish Scriptures that every prophet had expected a baptism with the Spirit ; that they had looked to it for a renovation of individual life and of society. "The wilderness and the solitary

place were to rejoice, the desert was to blossom with the rose."

But here more than anywhere he encountered the opposition of his countrymen. How dared he set aside the divine covenant of circumcision? How dared he say that a rite, which might be desirable enough for the admission of Gentiles to a share in secondary Jewish privileges, put them on a level with Jews? He could only reply that the highest privilege he knew of, or could imagine, was to be owned as children of God; to be endowed with his Spirit. That privilege he affirmed as the minister of Christ was intended for all, for those that were far off, and for those that were nigh. If they preferred to this the privilege of being called children of Abraham, they were departing from the faith of Abraham; they were denying the promise to Abraham.

The one baptism indicated to those who had accepted St. Paul's teaching, the widest comprehension of men separated by place and by circumstances which could be conceived. It indicated — what might have been forgotten by those who dwelt exclusively on the one faith — that this comprehensive fellowship was the work of God, not of men; that he chose them, not they him. But the baptism which Christ had appointed for all nations was to be into a Name. There-

fore the apostle's meaning would have been very imperfect if he had not added, —

7. "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." The one Lord whose servant he was had begun with speaking of his Father; had taught his disciples to say "Our Father;" had said to Mary Magdalene, after his resurrection, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." St. Paul had told Jews and Gentiles that they had both access by one Spirit to this Father. Here was the Unity which lay beneath the unity of the church, that of which its unity was the expression. The hard, material, exclusive oneness which the modern Jew associated with the object of his worship, till that object had been lost in a dead dogma about him, was changed for this living Name, around which all living sympathies entwined themselves, and yet which rose above all, a more awful transcendent Name than that which made the Hebrew lawgiver tremble as he entered into the thick darkness. The Father who is above all that an apostle can ask or think of — yet by the Son, who has taken the nature of all, manifests himself through all — by his Spirit works in us all. St. Paul knew well enough at how many points such language came into contact with the Pantheism of the Greek mind, — with what plausibility he might be accused of sanctioning the notion that the divinity was a vague

essence diffused through the universe. He was not afraid of that risk. He knew that if he taught the Ephesians to pray to a Father in whom the whole family in heaven and earth was named, there would be no fear of their falling into any impersonal notions. His gospel was a deliverance from such notions, whether they came from a Greek or Jewish source, because it was a message from a Father to his children who were scattered abroad in all lands; because it told them that he who had spoken in times past through prophets was in the latter days speaking by a Son who was the express image of his person, by whom he had made the worlds; because it said that the uniting Spirit could make them one, as the Father was one with the Son, and the Son with the Father. Before such a revelation the chaff of mere opinions was scattered. But it reconciled the hope of Israelites with the hope of Greeks; each was dying for want of the other to quicken it.

My friends, I have been speaking to you of the unity of the church. I have been gathering some hints about it from the man who watched over its cradle. Most who think that it has any real existence would own that those words must concern its manhood as much as its infancy; they would say, "Either there is no church in the world, and never has been, or St. Paul is telling us here what it has been and is and

must be." When therefore we hear any schemes proposed for restoring unity to the church, here we shall find a test of their worth which will be accepted as legitimate, — which no one who acknowledges the authority of the New Testament will dispute. We might indeed pause with some amazement at the thought that in the nineteenth century of the Christian era the question should be raised, "How can Christians unite? how can they be kept from exhibiting the greatest hostility to each other?" But we have not leisure for amazement. The fact is so. It cannot be gainsaid. The only safety lies in fully confessing it; the greatest danger in seeking to apologize for it or explain it away. Can we not deduce from the language which we have considered a few practical lessons which may guide our thoughts respecting this great subject, perhaps may in many ways determine our acts?

1. The first would be this. Whatever may be the remedy for the divisions of the church, we must not fancy that they could be removed by any recurrence to the conditions of the first century. We have seen that the infant society was formed out of the most contradictory elements; that they were continually making efforts to separate. The interest of its history lies in these struggles; we learn by degrees the power by which, in spite of them, it was held together.

2. The second lesson is that that power did not lie in any one of the apostles or in all of them together. St. Paul perceives schism growing in the churches; they cause him his bitterest distress; they drive him to his most earnest labors and prayers; but he never hints that there was any strength in him which could set them at rest. "Was Paul crucified for you? were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" is his language to those who called themselves after the highest of all human teachers.

3. Excommunication can never restore church unity. In the epistle which especially bears upon the subject of sects and schisms, St. Paul bids the Corinthians excommunicate for a while a man who had been guilty of an enormous crime, a crime abhorred by heathens. That was the moment for saying, "This will be found the great cure for the dissensions of which I have been speaking to you." The sects of Paulites, Cephasites, Apollosites, might have gladly caught at such a hint, and have tried to act upon it. Their teacher spoke of communion throughout his letters; of excommunication in the one instance to which I have alluded.

4. The fourth lesson is that the unity exists. "There is one body," says St. Paul, "there is one Spirit." These statements may sound as if they had become obsolete for us, as if the unity had ceased to be; as if all we can hope is to recover some faint

semblance of it, or to create some distinct approximation to it. But if that is, so the gospel is false, for it proclaims a unity in Christ for all nations; a unity which cannot cease to be unless he ceases to be. That we might realize this fact, I urged you to remember constantly that we Englishmen form a nation, existing from age to age; that we cannot sever that bond, however indifferent we may become to it. The great blessing of national trials is that they lead us back to the acknowledgment of it; that they turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the children to the fathers; that they awaken memory and awaken hope. That which calls itself the Catholic Church seeks to trample upon the unity of each nation, as if it were hostile to the higher Unity. The true Catholic Church must hail and cherish national unity as the induction to its own.

5. Unless we look upon ourselves as called to unity, we shall never be united. If God does not will that we should be united, what can our devices for producing it avail? Whereas, if we believe that it is his will, and that we are fighting against his will by our divisions, we have a right confidently to hope that he will at last bring us to repentance; or if we do not repent, will accomplish his purpose in spite of us. If we do regard unity as the great hope of our calling, as

the end which we are to set before us as the highest of all, our thoughts will be drawn,

6. To the one Lord.

Think how it can be possible for a Christian church to be united, if He whom it calls the centre of its union is forgotten. And yet what has been the fact? "As for the Lord who has ascended into the heavens, we wot not what has become of him; therefore let us set up a throne upon earth, and place a visible man upon it," — that has been the language of one large portion of Christendom. And how many of those who have protested against this form of denial have introduced another! How many have set up a mere notion of Christ in place of an actual living Lord, and have thought they could fraternize in that! When once again we began to hope in One whom we see not, to look up to him as an actual person, our Mediator and Advocate at the right hand of God, will not all things become new? Will not the barrier of separation between Christian nations and Christian men fall down, as the barrier between Jew and Gentile did fall down eighteen centuries ago?

For then, — 7. There will be indeed one faith, — a faith which rises out of all diversities of opinion, not altering or obliterating the characteristics of any race or any man, but drawing all to one centre, causing all to revolve in their proper orbits around that. Is it not

that which we have meant by a Catholic faith? Is not that the faith which our creeds try to express in the Father, in the only-begotton Son, in the Spirit who proceeds from them, and in whom they are one? "I believe," surely expresses not my acceptance of a cold set of opinions, but my allegiance to Him who has adopted us all into his family, to whom we have all access, from whom we all receive our life day by day.

8. And then that one baptism, which is so marvellously diffused through nations differing from each other in customs, education, government, will be regarded no longer as a symbol of our separation, as a subject for our controversies, but as in very deed declaring us to be sealed with the all-uniting Name; to be taken into a family of which He who died and is alive is the elder brother; the members of which, therefore, cannot be separated by place, or time, or death; whom a living Spirit is ever teaching and illuminating and bringing to a knowledge of that love which passeth knowledge.

9. Thus thinking of the baptism which binds together men of all classes, of all kindreds, of all customs, the old man and the little child, the ages past and the ages to come, — we cannot feel much sympathy with experiments for restoring church unity by arrangements or concessions among divines about points which have been in dispute for many centuries

between them. If these could be settled without disingenuous explanations on either side; if the attempt to settle them should not lead to fresh quarrels and divisions; if there were no peril of sacrificing real principles to verbal statements, — what would be gained for such a society as that which baptism represents by the termination of differences which not one in a hundred thousand of its members has even faintly apprehended? But, on the other hand, what might not be gained for the whole of this society, if those who are its guides and instructors in different lands were led to meditate in awful reverence, in joyful hope, upon that divine unity which baptism proclaims, which they confess to be at the root of Catholic unity, and of every smaller unity comprehended within that? To think of the unity of the Father with the Son in the eternal Spirit, not as a dogma which we can embrace, but, as what the creeds following St. Paul proclaim it to be, a mystery passing all comprehension, — the mystery of that ineffable charity which is above all, and through all, and in us all; to think of this as the unity in which we are living, the full vision of which is the object of all hope and its highest reward; what elevation of mind, what humility of mind, would not be the result of such meditations! How many dark spots would be illuminated by them, how many terrible fears dispersed! The great Florentine poet and theo-

logian was overwhelmed as he thought that the poet of his land, who had taught him so much wisdom, who had been his guide through so many abysses, could never be admitted to the daylight of God's presence because it was appointed that he should be born in a country and in a time to which the doctrine of the Trinity was not revealed. When the clouds of the world below were scattered from the heart of that sorrowing patriot, will he not have wondered how he had limited the eternal mystery by his time notions? May he not have had the joy of perceiving that its light had compassed all ages; that rays from it had illuminated the solitary chamber of every student, the hovel of every peasant; that there was no heart into which it had not through some crevice or other penetrated? I do not believe that any vision which can have rewarded the poet's longing in the highest circle of Paradise will have made him careless about the land which was the dearest to him during his pilgrimage; will have made him less intent in watching its agonies, less full of hope for its ultimate deliverance. But the hope will have been linked, more than it was here, with the assurance that there is a city in the light of which all the nations could walk, — a city which had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God lightened it, and the Lamb was the light thereof.

In that city, dear friends, let us, too, believe; for the

full discovery of it let us continually hope. As we cherish that faith and that hope, the mystery of the Trinity in unity will come before us now in one aspect, now in another, ever as a strength and a consolation when we are most overwhelmed by fears for others or for ourselves. We shall always find, if we seek, some point of contact which it gives us with a neighbor's heart; some ground of sympathy with him in his doubts and perplexities. The more we enter into St. Paul's feeling of the height and depth, the length and breadth of the mystery, the more shall we feel how it bears upon our daily practice; how it reminds us of our nothingness and of our greatness; how it warns us of our proneness to confound what we should distinguish, to divide what we should unite; how it teaches us that it is only love which can really distinguish, can really unite. We sometimes fear that we shall lose the faith once delivered to the saints, if we are merciful to each other's errors, if we eagerly seek for every man's truth. Is this faith of the Trinity the faith once delivered to the saints? Then we can only hold it fast on these very conditions; then we are in imminent peril of denying it whenever we are not endeavoring, with all the energy which God gives us, by daily confession of our own mistakes and ignorance, by bearing the infirmities of all our brethren, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The Hope of the Man.

SERMON IV.

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. — ROMANS v. 2.

OF St. Paul's hope for Gentiles, for Jews, for the church universal, we have heard. What was his hope for himself?

The question has been implicitly answered already. It deserves an explicit answer. I think we shall find one in the words which I have just read to you.

They stand in close connection with his whole letter. He had said at the commencement of it that the righteousness of God had been revealed to men; that this was the subject of his gospel. It had not been revealed to their eyes, but to their faith. Righteousness never could be revealed except to faith. God had called forth the faith of Abraham in his righteousness; he had believed in it; so he had become a righteous man, able to do right acts. That revelation was not to Abraham because he was in God's covenant; circumcision was the seal of the righteousness

which he had, being yet uncircumcised. He was not therefore an exceptional man. He was a pattern of what God would have all men be. He would have all trust him. They could only be righteous or do righteous acts when they trusted in a righteousness which was not theirs but his. That righteousness, St. Paul goes on to say, had been revealed in Jesus Christ to all. Jew and Gentile were called to believe in it, and so to become righteous in the very same sense in which Abraham was righteous. The righteousness of God manifested in Christ was for the forgiveness of sin, for the deliverance from sin. Christ had died for the sins of Jew and Gentile alike. He had risen for the justification of both alike.

So far he seems to be speaking of others. Now he introduces himself. "Therefore," he says, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God." The righteousness of God in Christ has been manifested to his faith. He asserts the same right to trust in it which every Jew and every Gentile has. He could not proclaim it to them till he had learned what it meant to him. He only learned what it meant to him when he understood that he was on their level. The law, which he had supposed gave him an advantage over the Gentiles, discovered to him the evil that was in him. If he took his stand upon that law, he was condemned. But the law bade him trust in a Deliverer.

He fulfilled the law when he recognized the righteousness of God which Christ had revealed; he fulfilled the law by giving up all claim to superiority over those who were without it. He had no such superiority; he was conscious of a sin in himself which he could impute to no other man. Believing in the divine righteousness which was for all equally, he could rise out of his sin, just as they, believing in the same righteousness, could rise out of theirs; so believing, he and they had peace with God. They could trust in the Being who was the enemy of their sin. They could be sure that he was their friend.

And this was no sudden ecstasy. It was a revelation to the apostle of a permanent standing ground, of the principle which was to govern his whole life. "By whom," he says, "we have access to this grace wherein we stand." At any moment to be looking out of himself, to be believing in one above himself, was his right, healthy condition. At any moment he must be depending upon the grace of God to keep him in that healthy condition. He might forget it often, he might relapse into self-confidence. Then he would be reminded, in some sharp way, what he was in himself, what he would become if left to himself. It would be a life-long discipline; but the result would be that which his baptism had expressed to him. He must die in himself if he would really live; his strength,

manliness, freedom, come from his union with a righteous Lord, who is the Lord of every man as well as of him.

And so he is able to explain to us what his hope is. He rejoices or boasts in the hope of the glory of God. He had said just before that all boasting of a man in himself on any ground whatever, personal or national, was excluded by that law of faith which he had been setting forth as the true law of all human creatures. But the tendency to boast, which is so natural, however mean and vulgar in its ordinary displays, must have some legitimate scope for its exercise. When we boast in hope we pass out of ourselves, we become absorbed in the object of hope. It may be a very insignificant object, a child's toy or holiday, or a grand procession. When the gift is won, it may seem very poor; we may be soon satiated with the possession. The joy was in the expectation. It is rather a cynical account of this fact to say,

"Man never is, but always to be blest,"

since there is so much bliss, though mixed with pain, in the desire. Yet that line describes faithfully how enjoyment dies in the moment in which a man exclaims, "Now I have it!" So one of the great paradoxes in our lives is illustrated by St. Paul's language. The hope he speaks of is one in which he could boast

or rejoice at one time as much as another; never more than when he was enduring bitter disappointment. The righteousness of God had been revealed to him. He could find in that a ground of confidence for himself and for mankind, a refuge from the evil of which his conscience accused him and from the darkness which he saw around him. What could he desire but that this righteousness should shine forth everywhere, that there should be no spot which its light should not penetrate? When he was actually believing that Christ's righteousness had been brought into conflict with sin and had proved the stronger, that Christ's life had been brought into conflict with death and had proved the stronger, must not this desire have carried in it the continual pledge of its own fulfilment? On the other hand, to keep the faith without the hope was surely impossible. Could he believe that God had discovered his glory in the redemption of mankind by his Son, if he did not expect that this glory would be revealed, and that all flesh should see it together?

Nevertheless, to maintain such a hope was a tremendous effort for any man, specially for a man who knew so much of the world's evil and of his own as the apostle. How this effort was possible he explains in a subsequent verse. "The love of God," he says, "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit which he hath given us." Whence came his power to care for his

countrymen who hated him, — for idolaters whom he had been taught to hate? Whence came his power to love any human being? If he sought for it in outward influences, he found most of these ungenial, all of them variable. If he gave himself credit for it, he assumed the highest merit, whilst he seemed to disclaim all merit. The only explanation of it was that the God who, he believed, had so loved the world as to give his only-begotten Son for it, had kindled this love in his heart, had rekindled it when it was waxing faint. The Christ had come to anoint men with that Spirit with which he was anointed. Whatever other gifts and endowments that Spirit might bestow, this surely was immeasurably the greatest; this expressed his own character and presence. But so long as St. Paul attributed to God every desire which he felt for the renovation of any fellow-creatures, how could the largest hope for the accomplishment of this desire seem to him extravagant; how could it (to use his own expression) make him ashamed? Let it be as bright as it would, it must fall short of that which the love that was stirring in him demanded. He was obliged to accuse himself not of the strength, but of the feebleness, not of the expansiveness, but of the narrowness, of his expectations.

This hope could have nothing in it of sentimental weakness, for this love had nothing. Christ had not

shrunk from pain and suffering, but had justified pain and suffering as instruments by which the divine love works out its ends. The love which the Spirit shed abroad in the apostle's heart did not lead him to shrink from pain and suffering, but to bear all that might be laid upon him. He could not grudge to his fellow-men any which might do them good. His hope for those who were most dear to him was, not that they should escape punishment, but that punishment should do its work for them, should turn their hearts to Him who smote them, should lead them from trust in themselves to trust in him. To himself and to others the discovery of the perfect mind and will of God must be the great reward; that which included all other rewards; that without which they must be worthless.

The question, then, with which I started has, I think, received a very direct reply from the apostle's lips; a reply which is in strict harmony with all we have learned from him hitherto. There is no occasion to distinguish between his hope for himself, and his hope for Gentiles and Jews and the church. His hope for them is in the fullest sense a hope for him; the hope for him involves the hope for them. And this not because he has been so busy with the universe that he has forgotten to ask whether he is standing on floating sand or on firm rock. It is this personal inquiry which has brought him to any clear apprehension about the

state of the world. He understood nothing of it whilst he was laying down maxims about its inhabitants, and determining which portion of them was in peril, which secure. Only when he was driven from these speculations and conclusions by the terrible necessities of his own being, — only when every plank that seemed to separate him from a yawning abyss cracked and floated away, — only then did he discover that the foundations of the universe were not built on rottenness; that there was One on whom he could cast it as well as himself. Then he could exchange confidence in his law or in his deeds for confidence in God's righteousness; then he could exchange the dread of God as a destroyer for the hope of his glory.

My brethren, every word I have spoken has had reference to St. Paul; to his outward circumstances, to his inward struggles, to his work, to the reward which he looked for in his work. And every word which I have spoken has reference to us; to the outward circumstances, to the inward struggles of each man who is here; to his work, to his reward. Let us follow the course of his thoughts as they have presented themselves to us in this passage, and those which are inseparably connected with it, and see whether he has told us anything of his life which he would not have us apply to our own.

1. We can never afford to forget what is the ground-

work of this epistle and of all the lessons which it contains. That the revelation of Christ is the revelation of God's righteousness ; that the gospel to mankind is the gospel of this revelation, — these may seem very simple and elementary maxims ; but they have not, I think, been superseded or displaced by any more modern and refined lore. And they are not so simple or elementary that we can reckon upon a secure possession of them. There are none which are more likely to slip away from us ; there are none which have been so often denied by those who have professed a great reverence for the church and the Bible ; none which have been more overlaid by human systems ; none which it has cost greater efforts to recover for the use of human beings. When they are put into a system they perish. They start to life again when we want them for work.

2. Next let us grasp as strongly, and with the same recollection how easily it may be taken from us, the apostle's assertion that this righteousness is revealed to faith ; that only faith can receive the revelation. The Evangelists repeat this lesson in every page. Christ, they say, was not revealed to those who saw him ; but to those who trusted him, because they wanted his help. That is the faith of which the New Testament speaks always. Not a faith which ministers to the senses ; not a faith which contradicts the senses ;

but one which apprehends what the senses cannot apprehend; the organ of the man himself, as the eye is the organ of his body.

3. If that is so, we have just the same warrant as the apostle had for believing in One who died for our sins, who rose again for our justification. We may argue very cleverly about the nature of sin, about the kinds and degrees of sin. But there is that in me which I know is at war with right; which does not like a righteous being. I want to get rid of that, whether I can describe its quality or no, whether or not I can compare the amount of it in me with the amount of it in other men. I have a witness in me that I ought to be freed from it, and that I cannot free myself from it. I have a witness as strong, that destruction and death ought not to prevail over creation and life. I am told that there is One, who, being righteous, has encountered evil and death, and has prevailed against them. Certainly such a message is an appeal to my faith. I cannot see the Deliverer; I should not know him better if I did. It is the consciousness of wrong, — of the weakness, superstition, falsehood, which accompany distrust, — that drive me to faith. If it enables me to cast off these, there is the evidence that I am intended to exercise it.

4. But this test only becomes satisfactory if we try, as St. Paul says, to stand on that principle which we

have accepted as the true one. It is easy to talk much of the grace of God, or of the power of faith. If we would know what the grace of God is, and how weak we are without it, the effort of every day to do right, the experience which every day brings of our proneness to go wrong, will teach us more than all digests of divinity. Especially when a man discovers that his outward acts are moulded by the secret thoughts of his heart, and when he asks how these can ever be set in order, — how he can banish the foul and dark imaginations which assault him, — how he can resist appetites and desires which are holding him in fetters, — oh, what strength lies in the news that he has a right to put off the old man which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; that he can actually put on the new man which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness! That new man is the real man, the man after God's own heart; the other is the false man, whom we make by denying our proper state, by giving up the life in Christ for the death which is in ourselves. And every act of repentance or turning to God is a resurrection out of that death, is an entrance into that life. The struggle to choose life and not death may be a hard and continuous one; but it is a struggle to hold fast a truth, the struggle not to believe and act a lie.

5. So we come to that other struggle, which is the

one I am specially concerned with in these sermons, — the struggle to hope. That, too, will be very hard, that must be repeated day by day. Spirits of cowardice, of self-indulgence will be about us every day, whispering to us the manifold arguments which there are against hope. "Why should you work? What good is to come of it all? Why should you believe? What have you to believe in? Why should you look to be happy? Does it not seem as if all these multitudes were born to be miserable?"

The last is the point at which we should begin our answer to these suggestions. You ask me what title I can make out to happiness? None. You ask me how I can prove myself better than the suffering multitude? I can offer no such proofs. You ask me then what I have to believe in? I answer, in Him who created all these myriads and me; in him who has redeemed these myriads and me; in him who works, even in me, by his Spirit, to care for these as well as for myself. I believe in him who brings the light out of darkness every morning, who causes his sun to shine on the just and on the unjust, on the good and on the evil. You ask me what is the good of work? I answer, if this is my belief, I am bound also to believe that every work, from the beginning of the universe until now, has been in some way or other for the manifestation of the glory of Him who created

it. I am bound to believe that no work of the hands, no work of the brain, has been useless. Every student of nature, of history, of language, of the world without or of the world within, so far as he is faithful, so far as he suffers no prejudices of other men, no prejudices of his own, to interfere with his search for truth in his own direction, must be a minister of God, one who is contributing in some way to the manifestation of his glory. Every man who is toiling honestly, in the field or at the loom, must be contributing to the manifestation of his glory. If any are unfaithful or dishonest, he will accomplish his purpose ; but it is our privilege, if we will, to enter into his purpose, to be fellow-workers with him. And every one who claims that privilege must cherish hope, — must treat as devils and powers of darkness all that would tempt him to despair.

Specially, my friends, must those who call themselves by the name of Christ's ministers, who have taken upon them the awful responsibility of preaching his gospel, cultivate this hope. They know, all too well, what the temptations are to abandon it. They may often see a bottomless pit of atheism opening at their feet, nearer to them than to all others, ready to swallow them and the universe. Hope, therefore, becomes to them not a pleasant luxury, but an intense necessity. They are sent to proclaim an atonement

of heaven with earth, of God with men. They are to testify of a blood which cleanseth from all sin, — of a divine Spirit who guides to all good. We must reduce these messages to our own measures; we must explain them away if we may not hope for the complete triumph of good over evil, of life over death. We have no heart or energy in ourselves to anticipate such a triumph. All that we see mocks us when we dream of it. Our refuge must be in the hope of that which we see not — in the God of hope. If we believe that his love was manifested in Christ, that all the hatred of men contended against it, and that it prevailed, we dare not lose hold of this hope, of this God. The language of St. Paul and of St. John may stretch beyond all that we can ask or think, but we have a right to use it. We may say we know in whom we have believed — we are sure that He will keep what we commit to him against his day. We may be confident that every enemy of Christ shall be put under his feet. We dare not reject the divine promise that every creature which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, and all that are in them, shall be heard saying, Blessing and honor and power and glory be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.

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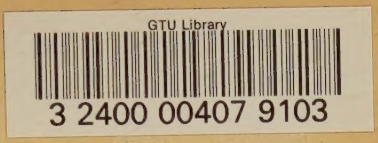

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